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Las Vegas Gazette.

LOUIS HOMMEL,

Editor & Publisher.

TERMS OF SUBSCRIPTION.

[INVARIABLY IN ADVANCE.]

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One copy, six months 2.50
One copy, three months 1.50

No subscription will be received for less than three months.

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First insertion, each square, \$2.00
Subsequent insertions, each square, 1.50

One square is equal to one inch of space.

Yearly advertisements inserted at a liberal discount.

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All communications devoid of interest to the public, or intended to promote private interests, will be charged as advertisements, and payment required in advance. If personal in character, we reserve the right to reject any such article or advertisement.

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Maj. J. B. M. Potter, Chief Paymaster.
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Port Union, Paymaster.
Maj. A. B. Carey, Paymaster.
Maj. E. Bridgman, Paymaster.

THE ALASKA FUR TRADE.

The following, relating to Alaska and its connection with the United States, not being a familiar topic of the public at large, we copy from the *Alaska Herald* for the information of our readers:

Among the leading industries and investments of Alaska may be ranked the seal fishery of the islands of St. Paul and St. George. The islands themselves are small, and derive their only importance from the fact that they constitute the summer resort and lying-in grounds of great numbers of fur seals; yet, insignificant as they appear upon the map (bearing about the same proportion to the entire Territory that a goat would bear to an elephant), they contribute a larger sum annually to the national revenue than that which the Government expends within the boundaries of Alaska. In other words, the industrious and much-worried patriarch of the *Californian ursinus* species not only "runs" the Territory, but earns quite a large surplus. This, it will be admitted, is a very satisfactory showing; and when it is added that the native inhabitants of the islands (the Aleuts) who are employed in seal killing receive five times as much pay for each pelt procured as was allowed them under the Russian ownership, and are besides furnished with houses and teachers, it would seem impossible that the hand of malice or envy should be continually at work to paint in false colors the conduct of the lessees under whose management results so fortunate have been achieved.

We have no special affection for monopolies, but a careful study of the subject has convinced us that the fur seal species can only be preserved by restricting slaughter and enforcing certain discriminations of age and sex. These restrictions, it is obvious, can not be maintained by merely giving them legal stamp and publicity; they require for their accomplishment a contract with responsible persons and the financial guaranty of good and sufficient bonds. The experience of all the great seal breeding localities of histories directed the judgment and shaped the action of Congress in regard to the Alaskan fisheries. It was known that the fur seal had to be treated carefully and skillfully, as among the most timid animals, and that if through carelessness or rapacity the rookery were once depopulated it would never be revisited; the habits of the animal were known, and it was well understood to be possible to capture the "bachelor" seal of the proper age without disturbing or alarming the others. Training and a sense of immediate responsibility were known to be requisite. It was equally demonstrable from history that no precautions would be taken against waste and flight if the grounds were open to intrusion from every quarter by men having only in view the securing of the largest number possible of pelts in a single season.

For these reasons—and for the further purpose of making the islands contribute to the national revenue—our Government determined to lease the fisheries for a term of twenty years to the highest and best bidder, at the same time restricting the number of seals to be slain to 138,000 per annum and imposing a tax upon each pelt exported of \$1.625. The Alaska Commercial Company obtained the lease, and the annual rental of \$55,000, together with the sum of \$202,500 of specific taxation annually, has been promptly met. That the Company has profit we do not doubt; but what justification this affords for the senseless falsehoods which are frequently uttered or printed in regard to the lessees, we cannot discover. The object, of course, is to induce Congress to abrogate the lease; but it will take some thing more than mere assertion, something more tangible than unfounded calumny, to effect such a purpose.

The Treasury Department keeps an agent and three assistants on the islands. These agents are sworn to exercise due vigilance and to report any violation of the terms of the lease. They represent the Government, have no interest in the Company, and may be presumed to speak the truth. They state that affairs there are in a prosperous condition, the Aleuts peaceable, and the number of seals increasing beyond precedent. This shows that the Company's agents are not the monsters of oppression and cruelty that they are sometimes painted; far from the good will of the "poor Aleuts" the fisheries could not be successfully maintained. Regard for their pecuniary interest, even if of feeling of humanity actuated them, would impel them to treat the natives with justice and fairness. It is also presumable that their personal safety is involved in the matter; for were they guilty of flagrant outrages upon the rights of the islanders, the latter could easily avenge themselves. The Company is said by its enemies to be backed by United States troops. The simple truth is, that with the exception of a few who are stationed at Sitka there are no soldiers in the Territory; they are not needed in numbers, for most of the tribes are peaceably inclined, and it is the direct interest of traders to be on good terms with them; the single military post now maintained in Alaska is at a sailing distance from the fur seal islands of several hundred miles. The occasional visit of a revenue cutter is the only proof the Government gives of its ability to maintain order, and it is very obvious that while residents will not unnecessarily provoke the hostility of the natives, such immense odds and with so little chance to escape unpunished.

Complaint is made that no vessel (unless in Government service) is permitted to visit and remain at the islands—the inference being that if the inhabitants are mistreated they have no opportunity to communicate with outsiders. This is a skillfully devised falsehood and some well-meaning journalists have been deceived by it. The fact is that while the Company exercises the exclusive privileges granted by the terms of its lease, and which the nature and peculiarities of a seal-hunt render absolutely necessary, it provides free transportation and refuge for Aleuts who may at any time wish to remove from the islands. Even were this denied, the inhabitants would not be without a recourse; for they would think nothing

of making a trip in their own bidarkas to some point where their statements could be made public. White men make far more perilous journeys, and with the Aleut management of the bidarka (small boat) is second nature.

Believing that fair-minded journalists sometimes through ignorance of the actual facts, are grossly imposed upon by malicious and designing persons, we have endeavored to present the plain, unvarnished truth for their consideration. The operations of the Commercial Company, like every other interest in Alaska, cannot but demand curatenction, and we feel that no apology is necessary for the space devoted to these topics. We have said only what reason, truth and conscience dictate. Perhaps a different course might bring us a more immediately profitable notoriety; but in the long run we believe the public will recognize and commend fair dealing. At all events, we shall not stop to inquire whether or not it will pay! The *Herald* will not live a single day after it shall have become possible to maintain it only by pandering to unfounded prejudice or fostering unworthy distrust. This was our determination in May last, when the paper came into our hands, and we adhere to it as firmly to-day.

Perhaps some of our recent subscribers have never had an opportunity to acquaint themselves with the rules prescribed by the Alaska Commercial Company for the guidance of its agents in the seal islands. As the perusal of these regulations will give the reader a fair understanding of the means by which the Company has preserved friendly relations with the Aleuts and successfully carried out the requirements of the Treasury Department, we give them place in conjunction with the foregoing remarks:

REGULATIONS.

1. The general management of the Company's affairs on the islands of St. Paul and St. George is entrusted to one General Agent, whose lawful orders and directions must be implicitly obeyed by all subordinate agents and employees.

2. Seals can only be taken on the islands during the months of June, July, September and October of each year; except those killed by the native inhabitants, for food and clothing, under regulations prescribed by the Secretary of the Treasury. Female seals and seals less than one year old will not be killed at any time, and the killing of seals in the waters surrounding the islands, or on or about the rookeries, beaches, cliffs or reefs, where they haul up from the sea to remain, or by the use of fire arms, or any other means tending to drive the seals away from the islands, is expressly forbidden.

3. The use of fire-arms on the islands, during the period from the first arrival of seals, in the spring season, until they disappear from the islands in autumn, is prohibited.

4. No dogs will be permitted on the islands.

5. No person will be permitted to kill seals for their skins, on the islands, except under the supervision and authority of the agents of the Company.

6. No vessels other than those employed by the Company, or vessels of the United States, will be permitted to touch the islands, or to land any persons or merchandise thereon, except in cases of ship wreck or vessels in distress.

7. The number of seals which may be annually killed for their skins on St. Paul Island is limited to 75,000, and the number which may be so killed on St. George Island is limited to 25,000.

8. No person other than American citizens, or the Aleutian inhabitants of said islands, will be employed by the Company on the islands in any capacity.

9. The Aleutian people living on the island will be employed by the Company in taking seals for their skins, and they will be paid for the labor of taking each skin and delivering the same at the salt house, forty cents, until otherwise ordered by the Secretary of the Treasury. For other labor performed for the Company, proper and remunerative wages will be paid, the amount to be agreed upon between the agents of the Company and the persons employed. The working parties will be under the immediate control of their own chiefs, and no compulsory means will ever be used to induce the people to labor. All shall be free to labor or not, as they may choose. The agents of the Company will make selection of the seals to be killed, and are authorized to use all proper means to prevent the cutting of skins.

10. All provisions and merchandise required by the inhabitants for legitimate use will be furnished them from the Company's stores, at prices not higher than ordinary retail prices at San Francisco, and in no case at prices above 25 per cent. advance on wholesale or invoice prices in San Francisco.

11. The necessary supplies of fuel, oil and salmon will be furnished the people gratis.

12. All widows and orphan children on the islands will be supported by the Company.

13. The landing or manufacture on the islands of spirituous or intoxicating liquors or wines, will under no circumstances be permitted by the Company, and preparation and use of fermented liquors by the inhabitants, must be discouraged in every legitimate manner.

14. Free transportation and subsistence on the Company's vessels will be furnished all people who at any time desire to remove from the islands to any place in the Aleutian group of islands.

15. Free schools will be maintained by the Company eight months in each year, four hours per day, Sundays and holidays excepted, and agents and teachers will endeavor to secure the attendance of all. The Company will furnish the necessary books, stationery and other appliances for the use of the schools, without cost to the people.

16. The physicians of the Company are required to faithfully attend upon the sick, and both medical attendance and medicines shall be free to all persons on the islands, and the acceptance of gratuities from the people, for such services, is forbidden.

17. The dwelling houses now being erected by the Company, will be occupied by the Aleutian families, free of rent or other charges.

18. No interference on the part of agents or employees of the Company, in the local government of the people on the islands, or in their social or domestic relations, or in their religious rites or ceremonies, will be countenanced or tolerated.

19. It is strictly enjoined upon all agents and employees of the Company, to at all times treat the inhabitants of the islands with the utmost kindness, and endeavor to preserve amicable relations with them. Force is never to be used against them, except in defense of life, or to prevent the wanton destruction of valuable property. The agents and employees of the Company are expected to instruct the native people in household economy, and, by precept and example, illustrate to them the principles and benefits of a higher civilization.

20. Faithful and strict compliance with all the provisions and obligations contained in the Act of Congress entitled "An Act to prevent the extermination of fur bearing animals in Alaska," approved July 1, 1870, and the obligations contained in the lease to the Company executed in pursuance of said Act, and the regulations of the Secretary of said Act, is especially enjoined upon all agents and employees of the Company. The authority of the Special Agents of the Treasury, appointed to reside upon the islands, must be respected whenever lawfully exercised. The interest of the Company in the management of the seal fisheries being identical in character with that of the United States, there can be no conflict between the agents of the Company and the agents of the Government, if all concerned faithfully perform their several duties and comply with the laws and regulations.

21. The General Agent of the Company will cause to be kept books of record on each island, in which shall be recorded the names and ages of all the inhabitants of the islands, and, from time to time, all births, marriages and deaths which may occur on the islands, stating, in cases of death, the causes of the same. A full transcript of these records will be annually forwarded to the Home Office at San Francisco.

22. Copies of these regulations will be kept constantly posted in conspicuous places on both islands, and any willful violation of the same by the agents or employees of the Company will be followed by the summary removal of the offending party.

Aleek is one of the leading merchants of New Orleans, and although a remarkably quiet man, is still fond of his practical joke. Although nearly, if not quite, "six feet in his stocking holes," he is so thin, that he looks as if there was not twenty pounds of flesh on his whole body.

Going along Canal street, the other day, Aleek noticed that a large, shaggy dog was following him. At the corner of Dauphine he saw a barefooted boy, and thinking to have a joke on the young 'un, he stopped, and inquired, "Boy, what do you suppose that dog is following me for?"

The youngster cast a knowing look at Aleek, and readily replied, "Guess he takes you for a bone!"

The *Boston Banner of Light* was the first paper lighted by the Boston fire.

The Mormons have three powder mills a cartridge factory and a large arsenal.

Michigan has another new railroad, called the Detroit and Bay City Railroad.

A man named Page asked a hotel keeper at Omaha what time it was, and being told that it was eleven o'clock, he shot himself through the head.

Telegraph News.

London, Dec. 21.—A large portion of the country in Leicestershire, Derby and Nottingham counties is submerged from the late floods; in some sections of these counties the tops of trees and hedges only are visible. A heavy land slide occurred near Dover and communication with that town is interrupted. The town of Peterborough in Northampton county is flooded, and many of the inhabitants were compelled to take refuge in the upper stories of their dwellings. A dispatch from Liverpool says 449 persons including passengers, are said to have perished by marine disasters during the past ten days. Thirty persons were lost alone by the sinking of the ship *Matchless* of Northumberland.

New York, Dec. 21.—The German central democratic committee last night reaffirmed the principles of the Cincinnati platform, and took steps to re-organize on those principles.

At Washington it is thought that the polygamy problem will soon be settled by the administration. The delegates in the interest of Young in that city, who recently came from Utah, are working with less hope to avert the coming storm. President Grant has expressed his determination to put an end to Mormon institutions, and after the holidays, the necessary laws will be presented to Congress. Rumors of impending changes among high officials in Utah are current.

Information has been received here stating that Catechary has not fallen into disgrace with the Czar; he has just been employed to adjust certain ecclesiastical differences between the Pope and Russians government concerning the appointment of Catholic bishops in Poland.

Sioux City, Dec. 31.—A Fort Sully dispatch to the *Journal* of this city in regard to the shooting of Capt. Arwing by the Sioux, says the feeling here is that the only remedy for the troubles with the Sioux is to occupy the black Hills country with miners.

The Indians all give account of wonderful mines of gold and silver in the black Hills, and it is asserted the Indians will not

permit the friendly ones or white men to go there. It is but a stronghold for hostile assassins, that should be broken up. All demands for the surrender of Indians guilty of outrages have been treated with contempt by the warriors and chiefs.

Paris, Dec. 21.—It is probable that many of the bridges in this city over the Seine will be swept away by the flood.

A dispatch from Naples says the gale which swept over that city yesterday was unexampled for violence, and done much damage to property and shipping.

Washington, Dec. 21.—A bill was introduced by Shanks to secure a more efficient Indian administration in the territories. Porter submitted an amendment to the constitution providing for the election of President, vice president and senators by the people.

A delegation of the Louisiana committee to-day expressed to the judges of the supreme court their desire to have Judge Bradley go to New Orleans and review the proceedings of Judge Durrell. Judge Bradley, however, thinks such a request should come from his associates who took the matter under advisement.

Chicago, Dec. 21.—A New York special says that the latest report regarding the Tribune is that Orton has tendered the chief editorship to Hon. James G. Blaine, speaker of the House of Representatives. It is said that Mr. Blaine was Orton's first choice, and that the negotiations with Mr. Colfax were brought about by Sinclair. Blaine has the proposition under advisement.

Salt Lake, Dec. 21.—A snow slide in Little Cottonwood carried away the building of the Emma mine, and severely cut and bruised two men.

CLIPPINGS.

Australia has white coal.

The Rev. Mr. Yocum marries people in Cincinnati.

Kansas puts towers 140 feet high on her school-houses.

The drowning of juvenile skaters has begun for the season.

A miss of sweet sixteen is preaching the gospel at Elgin, Ill.

Cleveland has a divorced couple at the dried-apple age of sixty.

"Hart's Bottom," a famous \$40,000 farm, near Lexington, Va., has been sold for \$19,200.

Oakland, Cal., brags confidently of its ability in a few years to buy San Francisco for a cemetery.

A small family in Petersburg, Va., has employed eighty-five colored cooks in the course of twelve months.

The American are exhibiting a growing fondness for titles and armorial bearings, and like to be thought aristocrats.

Gen. F. T. Dent has resigned his position as aid-de-camp on the staff of Gen. Sherman, to take effect January 1st.

A youth of Atchison, Kansas, drank two quarts of raw whisky on a wager, and his epitaph runs, "He smiled and died."

Pittsburgian philologists are puzzling their heads to find out how a very African fellow-citizen came to be called Barney Mahoney.

The editors and publishers of Maine are to celebrate Benjamin Franklin's birthday on January 17. Lemonade and tea and nice speeches.

The New York *World* states that justifiable homicide is now held to include "the case of every man who kills any other on account of any woman, and of any woman who kills any man on any account whatever." This is about true.

The Boston *Globe* complains that Livingstone is being sacrificed for Stanley. What gives additional poignancy to this fact is the rapidly growing belief that it would have been a good thing if Stanley had been sacrificed for Livingstone.

Seal skin fur, as we see it, is not in its original color. The natural shade is a pale muddy and unattractive straw color. By treatment with acids it becomes a rich golden yellow, and dyed as it usually is, it is of a dark shade, with just a tinge of purple.

"Bill Arp," the Georgia humorist, has been "interviewed" by several life insurance agents:

A friend (suppose he was a friend) found me and wanted to see me particularly. He took me a little way back and handed me out some little thumb papers, full of figures and said he wanted to insure my life. That skinned me worse than anything, for it looked like I was not in danger and he had just found it out. I asked him if he thought there was to be any fight. He explained things to me and I felt relieved, and declined to insure for the present. You see I felt mighty well, and couldn't see the necessity. At the next corner I met another friend, who seemed glad to see me, exceedingly.

He held my hand in his several moments. He axed me if my life was insured. He said he was agent for the best company. He then explained to me that I might die at any time; that they didn't undertake to keep any man from dying. So I declined, but, expressed my gratitude for his interest in my welfare, and promised to buy a policy as soon as I got right sick. Just as I left him I heard him call some pheller a durned phool. When I got to the hotel there was a man waitin' for me on the same business. He talked to me for an hour on the uncertainty of death. I thought he was a missionary. He seemed much concerned about my wife and children, and once or twice wiped his eyes with a pocket handkerchief. I knew he was a friend and told him I would reflect seriously about the matter.

I believe that company is a purely philanthropic institution and would lend a pheller a few dollars if he was suffering. I think I will try to borrow from a agent to-morrow. This morning the first one came to see me again and I konkluded I was looking nifty bad, and axed him to excuse me as I was not feeling well. I went down to Doctor Alexander and got a dose of salts. I told him I was sick and the reason why. He told me all about it, and said there was about one hundred of them phellers in town, and they bored half an inch at the first interview and an inch on the second in the same hole, and so on till they got to the hollow, and the patients gave in and took a policy. I don't know about that, but will say they are the friendliest, most sympathizin' and kind-hearted men I ever struck; only I don't like so much talk about coffins and graveyards. I didn't like the salts.

In all our cities the rush for mental labor and sedentary pursuits, with the view to avoid manual toil, is tremendous. At whatever cost of self-abasement, the glittering bauble of gentility is sought for by American young, so that it may not be said, "He is only a common mechanic." They forget, or have never been taught, that the greatest men of the age have sprung from the workmen. Eventual success in early life is a question of brains, not position. Let those in search of clerkships and other similar situations remember this great truth. Why should the badge of serfdom be assumed by those who choose to work where they are not really needed, in preference to where they are? By such a course, nobility of soul is sacrificed, and a recompense, at starvation rates is accepted, in order that the sniveling mendicant may have the world say that he is engaged in a respectable vocation—one that exempts him from manual labor. Shame on such a false standard of public opinion!

The troubler is that more persons insist upon living by commercial pursuits, literature, or in some other way than can possibly find employment. They can only find it by taking it from some one else. Many succumb to the worst forms of vice, under the pressure of absolute want. They run into temptation, and make the temptation an excuse for pauperism and crime. Let the young men of this land get an education if they possibly can, but by all means let them learn a trade!